



Upcoming DealersEdge webinars

The Chicago Automobile Trade Association has established a partnership with DealersEdge to provide high-quality training and informational webinars that offer the content to CATA member dealers at a significantly discounted rate.

The rate for CATA members for the weekly presentations is \$149, half what is charged to users who do not subscribe to DealersEdge. Webinars premiere on a near-weekly basis.

Even for dealers who hold an annual membership with DealersEdge, the new relationship with the CATA represents a savings because DealersEdge offers its Webinars to its own members for \$198. Regular annual membership fees are \$397, and normal webinar fees are \$298 for non-DealersEdge members.

Once purchased, DealersEdge webinars and accompanying PDF files can be downloaded and viewed later—and repeatedly. No matter how many people watch at your location, each connection costs a CATA member just \$149. A telephone connection is not needed; and the fee includes both PowerPoint slides and audio.

To register for any of the DealersEdge webinars, go to www.cata.info. On the tan bar across the top of the screen, click on Education/Careers and follow the drop-down menu to CATA-DealersEdge webinars.

Coming topics:

Premiering Thursday, Oct. 17 at 12 p.m. CDT

“Google Adwords: Tricks of the Trade to Get the Best Bang for your Digital Ad Bucks” Focusing on how to get started, plus retargeting, display ads, search advertising and more. Let’s break it down and learn how to make all this work!

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Cook business use tax thwarted again; county to appeal ruling

A temporary injunction imposed in July against Cook County collecting a 0.75 use tax on big-ticket items purchased outside the county became permanent Oct. 8, when the judge was asked to reconsider the matter.

The ruling came two days before Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle was set to unveil her 2014

budget, one which she had said would include “no taxes, no fines, no fees, no increases.”

Preckwinkle spokesman Owen Kilmer said he did not immediately know what the financial hit would be to the county if the tax cannot be collected again. Because the judge already had issued a

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Ford dealer donates \$45,000 in parts to 2 area collision repair schools

Arlington Heights Ford has donated \$45,000 in parts to York Community High School, in Elmhurst; and to Kennedy King College, in Chicago, through the Collision Repair Education Foundation.

The gifts provide an opportunity for students at both of these schools to practice collision repair on current model vehicle parts.

“We are always willing to help educate and promote young technicians,” said Tony

Guido, general manager at Arlington Heights Ford. “We need young people who are willing to get into the automotive collision and service industry. Hands-on is always the best experience.”

Kennedy King College collision instructor Kenneth McMillian said: “This donation was something that I really did not expect. “The donation of parts has really brought our collision courses to life. We received door

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Webinars

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Join Nan Mossey, the “Digital Diva,” for an online workshop on how to get the greatest benefit from your online search efforts, and Google Adwords in particular. This workshop is perfect for all automotive retailers, including larger multi-rooftop groups, and especially those who want a better understanding of the latest digital marketing trends and how to get the best results.

Premiering Thursday, Oct. 24 at 12 p.m. CDT

“How to Self-Audit Your Own F&I Process & Compliance” How to minimize financial and reputation damage from customer lawsuits and audits from regulatory agencies. Six- and seven-figure audit liabilities are common. Learn to steer clear of often hidden F&I pitfalls.

Make no mistake, the failure to comply with the many and diverse regulations governing your F&I practices can cost you big bucks. It also can fry your public reputation as regulators, auditors and plaintiff attorneys try to drag your practices and your good name into the hall of shame. This is absolutely one of those areas where what you don’t know (or didn’t think was important) can hurt badly.

Terry Dortch of Automotive Compliance Consultants, a CATA member, will be with us for this detailed look at those items and practices that are causing your fellow dealers the most heartache.

In Memoriam

Thomas C. Todd, a Northfield resident who in 1968 became the first Chevrolet dealer to move a franchise from Chicago to the suburbs, died Oct. 1 at his retirement home in California. He was 91.

Mr. Todd began a 47-year career with Chevrolet in 1952, following service in the Marines in World War II and the Korean War, where he rose to the rank of captain.

He played many famous golf courses around the world, including most of the 100 greatest golf courses in the United States, as ranked by Golf Digest magazine. He was a member for 58 years of the Westmo-land Country Club, in Wilmette, and served as club president in 1979-1980.

Mr. Todd sold his Wheeling dealership in 1998 to his general manager and business partner, Bill Stasek, who continues its operation.

Survivors include his wife, Lois; daughters Mary Ellen, Jane and Nancy; son Tom; and seven grandchildren. Donations appreciated to the Evans Scholars Foundation, (847) 724-4600.

U.S. electric car sales up 447% vs. '12

The number of electric cars sold in America is up 447 percent compared to sales at this time last year, EVObsession, a website that describes itself as “for the electric-vehicle obsessed,” reported Oct. 4.

One of the big drivers, perhaps unsurprisingly, was Tesla, whose sales rocketed up 8,056 percent this year, with sales of 13,050 units this year versus 160 units in 2012.

On the whole:

- 100 percent electric car sales are up a huge degree — 447 percent (33,617 units vs. 6,135 units)
- Plug-in hybrid electric car sales are up a fair degree — 35 percent (32,718 units vs. 24,082 units)
- And conventional hybrid electric car sales also are up quite a bit — 21 percent (360,245 units vs. 297,656 units)

Combined, hybrid and electric car sales are up 30 percent in the U.S. Between the beginning of January 2013 and the end of September, 426,580 such cars were sold in the U.S., up from 327,873 sold in January-September 2012.

Parts

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skins, quarter panel, front rails, hoods, bumper covers, bumpers, bumper fascias, core supports, etc.

“Through this donation we can now give hands-on practicum in real time on what is being lectured in the classroom. Thank you to Arlington Heights Ford and the Collision Repair Education Foundation.”

Brandon Eckenrode, the director of development at the foundation, said the Hoffman Estates-based nonprofit is reaching out to individual dealerships and dealership groups to donate the thousands upon thousands of dollars in parts that many are scrapping each month.

“They make great donations for local high school and college collision school programs,” said Eckenrode. “These current model vehicle parts are great practice material for the students, and we want to end the days of collision instructor ‘dumpster diving’ by helping to connect the dealerships with local schools.”

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The CATA Bulletin is distributed via blast e-mail every other Friday except during the Chicago Auto Show, when it is not produced.

Listings of items for sale are subject to the approval of the CATA.

Candidates for employment must submit a full resume to the Editor.

Review past editions dating to 1998 or search by subject at www.cata.info.

David E. Sloan
Erik K. Higgins

President, Publisher
Editor, Director of Dealer Affairs

Know the change in the HazCom regulation

Employers are responsible for implementing the changes in the Hazard Communication regulation at their dealership. So, as an employer, what do you need to know about the changes?

1. Hazards now must be classified, noting the hazard class and hazard category. This will define the level of hazard and the degree of severity.

2. Percentages for classifying mixtures now have a tiered approach, instead of broad definitions.

3. The new standard requires specific information and language on labels. Harmonized signal words, pictograms and hazard statements must be used.

Additionally, statements listing precautionary hazard measures must be listed.

4. 16-section safety data sheets (SDS) now are required to provide consistent information.

5. OSHA's mandatory permissible exposure limits (PELs) and the non-mandatory threshold limit values (TLVs) must be listed on the SDS.

6. Employers are required to train employees on the new label elements.

7. Employees must be trained on the new standard by Dec. 1, 2013. Compliance with the modified provision of the final rule must be met by June 1, 2016.

8. Distributors may ship products labeled under the old HazCom standard until Dec. 1, 2015.

9. Employers must update workplace labeling and written hazard communications by June 1, 2016.

This article is written by KPA, which provides environment and safety services for auto, RV, and heavy equipment and agricultural dealers. Contact KPA at info@kpaonline.com or (800) 853-9659.

county and avoid paying county sales taxes. Instead, the tax has riled business.

Attorney Michael Wynne, who represented the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce in its lawsuit challenging the use tax, called it "a very invasive tax."

The latest revenue generator resembles a 1 percent use tax that Chicago has levied since 1992. But more onerous than the city's levy, which gets settled once a year, the county tax would have to be paid monthly.

The use tax on so-called "non-titled personal property" was first imposed in April at a rate of 1.25 percent. Cook County commissioners in June cut the rate to 0.75 percent, a move Preckwinkle hoped would bring it into line with federal tax rules and bolster the county's case in court.

Sedgwick deflects Q3 2013 jobless claims

Fifty-eight CATA dealer members reported a combined 121 unemployment claims during the third quarter of 2013 to Sedgwick Claims Management Services, Inc., which has been serving CATA dealers under various names since 1979. The company's efforts saved those dealers a total of \$174,650 in benefits by contesting the claims.

Sedgwick CMS monitors any unemployment claims against its clients and contests all unwarranted claims and charges. The company counts about 260 CATA dealers among its clients.

The number of claimants and affected dealers and benefit amounts were at their lowest numbers in years.

Claims that can be protested and subsequently denied help minimize an employer's unemployment tax rate. The rate can vary between .55 percent and 8.95 percent of each employee's first \$12,900 in earnings.

The 2013 average unemployment tax rate among Illinois employers is 4.15 percent, or about \$535 annually per employee (\$590 in 2012).

The 2013 rate marks the first time since 2007 that the average Illinois unemployment tax rate declined the following year.

"The unemployment tax is really the only controllable tax, in that it's experience-driven," Schardt said. An ex-employee's claim affects the employer's tax rate for three years.

For new enrollees, client fees amount to \$2.60 per employee, per fiscal quarter. For the fee, Sedgwick monitors all unemployment claims; files any appeals; prepares employer witnesses for hearings, as necessary; represents the client at any hearings; verifies the benefit charge statements; and confirms the client's unemployment tax rate.

To discuss retaining the company, call Schardt at (773) 824-4325 or Bruce Kijewski at (773) 824-4322.

Use tax

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temporary injunction, county officials were not counting on a great deal of revenue from the tax this year.

Nevertheless, Preckwinkle's office said she would appeal the ruling of Cook County Circuit Judge Robert Lopez Cepero. The use tax would target individuals and companies based in the county who go elsewhere to save money on large expenses such as office supplies or equipment worth more than \$3,500. Real estate and vehicle purchases would be exempt.

Billed by county officials as the Buy Local Tax, the charge is an attempt to help Cook County businesses by closing a loophole that enables purchasers of personal property to buy outside the

Tune in ...

... to "Drive Chicago," the CATA's automotive radio show, 8-9 a.m. Saturdays on WLS-AM 890.



Federal agencies issue optional used-car fuel economy label

The U.S. Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency have released a fuel economy label for optional, voluntary use by used vehicle sellers.

Labels can be printed or downloaded from www.fueleconomy.gov for light-duty vehicles dating 1984. Dealers or private sellers interested in using the label can display it on or in their used vehicles, or hand it to prospective customers.

The National Automobile Dealers Association developed several FAQs to assist dealers with issues related to the new used vehicle label:

Q: What's on the used vehicle fuel economy label?

A: The label includes fuel economy ratings from when the vehicle was new, a vehicle photo, vehicle configuration information (e.g., engine size, transmission type, and fuel type), and a scannable QR code linking to www.fueleconomy.gov.

Q: How does this label compare

to the EPA/NHTSA label for new vehicles?

A: The label for new vehicles is mandatory for manufacturers of light-duty vehicles, who typically include the fuel economy ratings on the Monroney label. The used vehicle label is voluntary and optional.

In addition, the used-vehicle label has less information than the one for new vehicles. Both labels have disclaimers regarding the real world fuel economy the vehicle may achieve.

Q: How can the fuel economy ratings for vehicles (when they were new) apply to them when they are used?

A: Data shows that a vehicle's fuel economy changes very little over its typical 15-year life, assuming it is properly serviced and maintained.

Importantly, the EPA's fuel economy estimates are generated for each vehicle under similar laboratory conditions, enabling shoppers to make good vehicle-to-vehicle fuel economy comparisons.

Again, the importance of the disclaimer regarding "real world" fuel economy cannot be overstated.

Q: What else do I need to know about the used vehicle label disclaimer?

A: Since the fuel economy any vehicle actually will achieve is dependent on a variety of factors, the used-vehicle label states: "Actual fuel economy will vary for many reasons including driving conditions and how the car was driven, maintained, or modified. This label contains EPA mileage and CO2 estimates for this vehicle when new."

Q: Any other considerations?

A: While the DOE and the EPA used-vehicle label is voluntary and optional, the NADA suggests that it be used if and when any claims are made regarding a used-vehicle's fuel economy.

Also, it is possible that some OEMs may elect to suggest or require use of the label with certified used-vehicle programs.

Gas price drop renews interest in thirstier cars

Following months of steady gains, the average fuel economy for 2013 light-duty vehicles sold in the U.S. dipped in September, a new study finds.

Researchers at the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute — who calculate average sales-weighted fuel economy using monthly sales of individual models of cars, SUVs, vans and pickup trucks, as well as respective models' EPA fuel-economy ratings — attribute the decrease to recent reductions in the price of gasoline.

The "window-sticker" fuel-economy value of new vehicles sold in September

was 24.6 miles per gallon, down 0.3 mpg since August; that follows 0.1 mpg gains in both July and August, after a slight dip in June.

Despite the decrease, compared with the same period in 2012, the average fuel economy was up 0.8 mpg. Moreover, since the institute started tracking the numbers in October 2007, the average fuel economy has improved by 4.5 mpg.

Meanwhile, motorists' greenhouse-gas emissions continued to decline in September, according to the University of Michigan's Eco-Driving Index, which estimates the monthly amount of greenhouse gases pro-

duced by an individual U.S. driver who has purchased a new light-duty vehicle that month.

September's EDI stands at 0.8, a 20 percent improvement since October 2007, and an incremental improvement since June.

EDI takes into account both the fuel used per distance driven and the amount of driving.

A year ago, the post-Labor Day period was marked with rising prices at the pump, thanks to a brutal hurricane season. Things are different this year, with prices remaining subdued even with concerns about strife in the Middle East.

Alabama dealer elected NADA chairman for '14

Forrest McConnell III, a Honda-Acura dealer in Montgomery, Ala., was elected this month to become the 2014 chairman of the National Automobile Dealers Association, making him the second dealer from that state to lead the NADA.

McConnell assumes the chairmanship at the 2014 NADA Convention & Expo, Jan. 24-27 in New Orleans.

Other 2014 officers are Vice Chairman Bill Fox, of New York; Secretary Jeff Carlson, of Colorado; and Treasurer George Nahas, of Florida.